

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

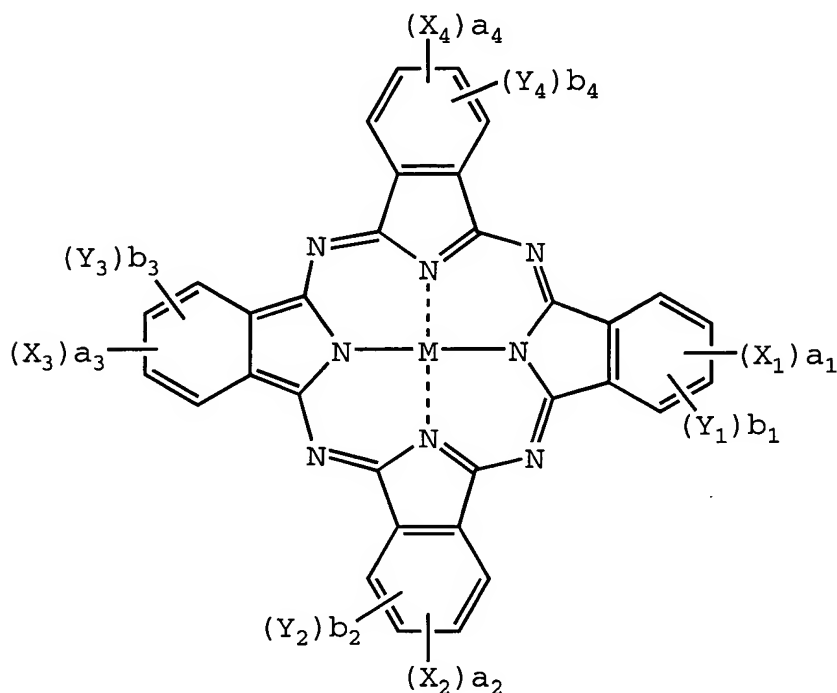
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): An inkjet recording ink comprising an aqueous medium having dissolved ~~or dispersed~~ therein a dye represented by the following formula (I), which is water-soluble and contains a lithium ion as a counter ion,

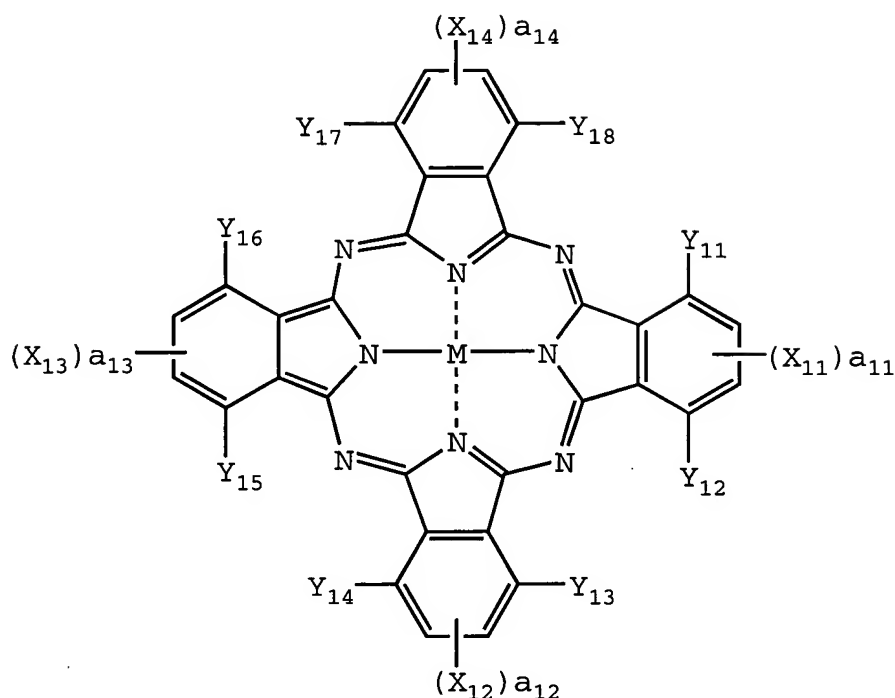
wherein the total amount of a cation in said ink except for a lithium ion, a hydrogen ion, an ammonium ion, an organic quaternary nitrogen ion and an ion produced by the proton addition to a nitrogen atom in a basic organic material is 0.5 wt% or less:

Formula (I)



wherein X_1 , X_2 , X_3 and X_4 each independently represents $-\text{SO}-\text{Z}$, $-\text{SO}_2-\text{Z}$, $-\text{SO}_2\text{NR}_1\text{R}_2$, a sulfo group, $-\text{CONR}_1\text{R}_2$ or $-\text{CO}_2\text{R}_1$; Z represents a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted cycloalkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkenyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aralkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group; R_1 and R_2 each independently represents a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted cycloalkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkenyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aralkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group, and when a plurality of Zs are present, the Zs may be the same or different; Y_1 , Y_2 , Y_3 and Y_4 each independently represents a monovalent substituent, and when a plurality of X_1s , X_2s , X_3s , X_4s , Y_1s , Y_2s , Y_3s or Y_4s are present, the X_1s , X_2s , X_3s , X_4s , Y_1s , Y_2s , Y_3s or Y_4s may be the same or different; a_1 to a_4 and b_1 to b_4 represent the number of substituents X_1 to X_4 and Y_1 to Y_4 , respectively; a_1 to a_4 each independently represents an integer of 0 to 4 but all of a_1 to a_4 are not 0 at the same time; b_1 to b_4 each independently represents an integer of 0 to 4; M represents a hydrogen atom, a metal atom, or an oxide, hydroxide or halide thereof.

2. (original): The inkjet recording ink as described in claim 1, wherein the dye represented by formula (I) is a dye represented by the following formula (II):



wherein X_{11} to X_{14} , Y_{11} to Y_{18} and M have the same meanings as X_1 to X_4 , Y_1 to Y_4 and M in the formula (I), respectively, and a_{11} to a_{14} each independently represents an integer of 1 or 2.

3. (currently amended): The inkjet recording ink as described in claim 1, which further comprises ~~at least one of a lithium ion and a hydrogen ion~~.

4. (original): The inkjet recording ink as described in claim 1, wherein the cation in said ink except for a lithium ion, a hydrogen ion, an ammonium ion, an organic quaternary nitrogen ion and an ion produced by the proton addition to a nitrogen atom in a basic organic material is at least one selected from the group consisting of a potassium ion, a sodium ion, a cesium ion, a magnesium ion, a zinc ion, a calcium ion, a strontium ion, an aluminum ion and a transition metal ion.

5. (original): The inkjet recording ink as described in claim 1, wherein the cation in said ink except for a lithium ion, a hydrogen ion, an ammonium ion, an organic quaternary nitrogen ion and an ion produced by the proton addition to a nitrogen atom in a basic organic material is at least one of a potassium ion and a sodium ion.

6. (new): The inkjet recording ink described in claim 1, wherein the dye has an ionic hydrophilic group.

7. (new): The inkjet recording ink described in claim 1, wherein the dye has at least two hydrophilic groups within one molecule.

8. (new): The inkjet recording ink described in claim 1, wherein the dye has an ionic hydrophilic group selected from the group consisting of a carboxyl group, a phosphono group and a sulfo group.